The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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CONTENTS OF NO. 2.

THE BETTER WAY 13
OUR THOUGHT OF GOD 13
THE STILL HOUR 14
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB 15
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL 17
NATURAL HISTORY: THE MAKING OF A BUTTERFLY 20
AMUSEMENT COLUMN 23
IMPORTANT NOTICES 24

THE BETTER WAY.

Who serves his country best?
Not he who, for a brief and stormy space,
Leads forth her armies to the fierce affray.
Short is the time of turmoil and unrest,
Long years of peace succeed it and replace:
There is a better way.

Who serves his country best?
Not he who guides her senates in debate,
And makes the laws which are her prop and stay;
Not he who wears the poet's purple vest,
And sings her songs of love and grief and fate:
There is a better way.

He serves his country best
Who joins the tide that lifts her nobly on;
For speech has myriad tongues for every day,
And song but one; and law within the breast
Is stronger than the graven law on stone:
There is a better way.

He serves his country best
Who lives pure life and doeth righteous deed,
And walks straight paths, however others stray,
And leaves his sons as uttermost bequest
A stainless record which all men may read:
This is the better way.

No drop but serves the slowly lifting tide,
No dew but has an errand to some flower,
No smallest star but sheds some helpful ray,
And man by man, each giving to all the rest,
Make the firm bulwark of the country's power:
There is no better way.

OUR THOUGHT OF GOD.

Can we ever be sure of the fact of God? Can we be as sure, for example, as we are sure of the existence of our friend whom we see and talk with every day? The thinkers and the men of religion tell us that God is the central fact in the universe, that he is the only reality, without whom all else would vanish, that he is present everywhere. If the voices of religion are true, if God really is, we ought surely to be easily made aware of him.

Observe that there is no such difficulty as once hindered men from knowing God. Men once conceived of God as living at a distance and ruling the world by deputies. You might go to him when you died, you might see him in heaven; but you could not expect to see him here. You could only be sure of him, if at all, because you had been told about him. We do not say this any longer. If he is anywhere, he is here. If we can ever be sure of him in another life, we can be sure of him in this present life. If in any honest sense prayer or communion is real, it must be because each soul of us has direct access to the universal life. It is this or nothing. And all the greatest affirmations of religion assure us that it is precisely this.

What obstacle, then, prevents us from being as sure of God as we are sure of our nearest friend? Let us search for our innermost doubt. We cannot see God's face, we cannot touch his hand, we cannot hear his voice, as we see, touch, and hear in the case

of our friend. Is this true? Recollect that we never see or touch or hear the soul of our friend. That which thinks, wills, aspires, and loves, is beyond sight or sense. He, too, never quite sees us. Our senses are only so many avenues of approach to each other. Nevertheless, they suffice. We are perfectly sure of each other's thought and love and reality.

What we wish to suggest is that we do see, touch, and hear God as truly at least as we see, touch, and hear in the case of our friend. Our friend has a few familiar aspects of his face, a few motions of his body, a few tones of his voice. God has infinite aspects, motions, and voices. Our friend at times perplexes us with words, looks, deeds, which for the moment do not seem to accord with his character. Nevertheless, at his best, all apparent inconsistencies dissolve, and we love one another. In his unity, heart and soul and mind, he is our good friend. At our best, we see and know the perfect and full-grown man,—the soul of our friend.

It is just so in our knowledge of God. There are moments, there are aspects, there are motions, which perplex us. How should there not be in an infinite nature? Yet at our best, when we see clearest, when the great laws come into view, when the eternal motions are visible, when the voices of God speak their deeper message of harmony and unity, our souls rest in God as truly as ever the thoughts of ancient Psalmist rested in the Eternal. Have we not heard God in the forest or by the ocean or in the mighty inspired music of Bach or Beethoven or Brahms? Whom else did we hear? Have we not been in touch with God when our hands have clasped the hands of the faithful, the high-minded, the merciful, in a common bond of allegiance? Was it not allegiance to the Spirit of the universe, making itself felt in actual presence? Have we not seen God in skies and stars, in snow crystals and flowers, in the eyes of little children, and often in the smile of love which would give all for our sake? Where else, except out of the heart of the universe, did this wonderful light of love gleam upon us? Yes! we are poor, if we have not many a time stood in the presence chamber of the Eternal. Do we not always stand there? Can we ever flee from his presence? Do we not then know—what the fact is—that we live in God's world, and, indeed, are his children?

I have spoken, so far, as if we might be at least as sure of God as we are of our nearest friends. We have seen that we are assured of the presence and reality of God in the same way as we are made aware of any personality. I go on to say that we know the reality of God more directly still. We are not dependent upon what our senses convey to us through the display of power, through the sight of endless worlds traversed by Law and bound together into Unity, through scenes of matchless order and beauty, through marvellous harmonies of music, through the light of friendly Love shining upon us.—*C. F. Dole.*

THE STILL HOUR.

To love and seek return,
To ask but only this;
To feel where we have poured our heart
The spirit's answering kiss;
To dream that now our eyes
The brightening eyes shall meet,
And that the word we've listened for
Our hungering ears shall greet,—
How human and how sweet.

To love nor find return,
Our hearts poured out in vain;
No brightening look, no answering tone,
Left lonely with our pain;
The opened heavens closed,
Night when we look for morn,
The unfolding blossom harshly chilled,
Hope slain as soon as born,—
How bitter, how forlorn!

To love nor ask return,
To accept our solitude;
Not now for others' love to yearn,
But only for their good;
To joy if they are crowned,
Though thorns our head entwine,
And in the thought of blessing them
All thought of self resign,—
How godlike, how divine!

Samuel Longfellow.

When from the dawn of life we see all things working together toward the evolution of the highest spiritual attributes of man, we know, however the words may stumble in which we try to say it, that God

is, in the deepest sense, a moral being.—*John Fiske.*

Those anticipations of immortality and God,—what are they? Shall I call them God, Father, Spirit, Love?—a living being within me or outside of me? Tell me thy name, thou awful mystery of loveliness! This is the struggle of all earnest life.—*F. W. Robertson.*

If we can only get out of our souls the thought that it matters not if we are happy or sorrowful, if we are only dutiful and faithful and brave and strong, then we should be in the atmosphere, we should be in the great company, of the Christ.—*Phillips Brooks.*

Religion is no assent of the lips. It is no mere conclusion of thought or conviction of the understanding. It is first a sense of duty, leading to the embodiment of the highest powers in daily acts. In the end it is a ready service rendered to every good cause.—*John Learned.*

Love is the ground of ethics, the spring of motive, and the regnant principle of all action. It is the law and the pervading spirit of the kingdom of God. It is thus the deep-lying bond of social unity. The aspiration for the coming of the kingdom of God is an aspiration for the universal rule of love.—*Philip Moxom.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.*]

BEFORE WRITING TO ASK FOR BOOKS, DO NOT FAIL TO READ THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 373 *Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.?*

The following books are offered by the Second Church Branch, Salem. Address Miss Decker, 4 Mt. Vernon Street, Salem, Mass. Reference required with first request. "His Inheritance," Adeline Trafton; "The Moorland Cottage"; "The Sisters"; "A Tallahassee Girl"; "Fraternity"; "A Change of Air," Anthony Hope; "A Beginner," Rhoda Broughton; "The House Beautiful"; "A Day with Christ," Rev. S. Cox; "Glimpses of Heaven"; "Gospel Hymns"; "The Uprising in the United States in 1861"; "Labors of the First Missionaries in the South Sea Islands"; "The Truth Tellers," John Strange Winter; "Marjorie's Quest," J. F. Gould; "The Village Idol"; "The Hartwell Farm," Laura Caxton; "The Story of a Short Life," Mrs. Ewing; "Country Doctor," Miss Jewett; "Prince Otto," R. L. Stevenson; "Thrown Together"; "Stories from my Attic"; "Happy Thought Hall"; "His Great Self," Marion Harland; "Half Holidays."

The following books are offered by the Springfield Branch. Address Miss Clara D. Hoar, care of Samuel Bowles, Crescent Hill, Springfield, Mass. "Thoreau," H. A. Page; "Life of Charlotte Brontë," Mrs. Gaskell; "Dred," Mrs. H. B. Stowe; "Life of Rutherford B. Hayes," W. D. Howells; "The World Beautiful," Lilian Whiting; "Betty Alden," Jane G. Austin; "Days of Auld Lang Syne," Ian Maclaren; "Hymns and Sonnets," Eliza Scudder; "Sesame and Lilies," Ruskin; "Miss Bretherton," Mrs. Humphry Ward; "Life of Nancy, and Other Stories," Sarah Orne Jewett; "In Nazareth Town, and Other Poems," Chadwick; Bible (large print); "Sermons for Children," Dean Stanley; Warren's "Brief Course in Geography"; "Children's First French Reader" (Cyr); Harrington's "Spelling Book"; "Dotty Dimple Out West"; "Little Mermaid, and Other Stories," Andersen; the *Outlook* for 1900 (except August); the *Outlook* for 1901, current numbers to be sent after reading.

"With Fire and Sword"; *Outlook*, 1898, 1899, and 1900, and recent numbers of the *Chautauquan* are offered by Miss C. Schetter, 75 Highland Avenue, Orange, N.J.

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

Mrs. Mattie T. Clark, Stuart, Patrick County, Virginia, writes: "Please send 'In His Steps'; 'Sunny Bank,' by Marion Harland. I have 'Alone' and 'Moss Side,' but would be glad of any other of her works, any of Augusta Evans's works, or any of T. S. Arthur's books, or any good book.

Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—I wish to thank you all for the pleasure and profit derived from the books and papers which you have so kindly sent to me. I ask a continuance of these same pleasures, and have been unable to write and thank each one; and I take this method of thanking you all, and would be very glad to get a few good novels or any reading. I will pass them on to others. I would be glad also for something that would interest and instruct my children. I have four, the oldest twelve and the youngest four years old. Mrs. Mary L. Brown, Nettle Ridge, Patrick County, Virginia.

My mother died eight years ago, leaving me the care of her little ones. I have felt it a great responsibility on my part when I was only a child of twelve. I have seen a great many troubles since her death, and would be glad of any good reading, such as good religious novels, and would also be glad to correspond with some one. While I am writing to you, it don't seem that I am writing to a stranger. I have three brothers and one little sister. She was only one year old when my mother died. I have one brother older than myself. I will be twenty-one years old my next birthday, which will be in August. (Miss) Rosa M. Finder, Cosby Post-office, Orange County, Virginia.

I am truly thankful to those who have sent me reading matter through the past winter and spring. I hand it to others, and in that way try to keep the good work going on. I would be glad to get some books from time to time, such as "Vashti," "St. Elmo," "Thelma," and am especially anxious to get a Bible, tolerably large print. I have two little boys.

Miss Mary I. Howse, Glenzaida, Alabama, who corresponded with Mrs. M. E. Walbach, has received literature only once or twice since Mrs. Walbach's death. She would still be very glad to get some. Mrs. D. E. Howse, Glenzaida, Jackson County, Alabama.

Miss E. A. Downing, Newington, New Hampshire, will be glad to receive the Boston *Transcript* or New York *Sun*.

Mrs. John Mabe, Ayersville, North Carolina, will be glad of any reading.

I am a poor woman, living in a poor country with my husband and two little children, trying to make a living on a farm. Our land is poor, and it is a hard struggle for us to make a living. We live in a lonely place two miles from the town of Polkton, and have but few close neighbors. So you may know that I have many lonesome hours to spend while my husband is attending to outside work. I would like to have some way to spend this time while I am alone. Mrs. Sallie Candle, Polkton, North Carolina.

I am a young girl whose mother is an invalid, and at a hospital twenty miles from home. I get very lonesome during the day, and would be glad of any reading matter which you would send. I would also like some correspondents about my own age, which is eighteen. I will pass the reading matter on to others, who, like myself, are

unable to pay for it. Miss Maie Andrews, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina.

"The Young Wife" is asked for by D. McAlister, Trenton, Texas.

I wish some one would send me Otto's "French Grammar" and a dictionary. I have especially enjoyed the books of poems I have received, and should be glad of anything by Longfellow, Poe, or Tennyson, and, instead of sending as formerly to Miss Rosa Bailey, Box 781, Waco, Texas, address Mrs. E. B. Benson, Mingos, Texas.

We are very poor people; have no means to spend for reading or books of any kind. I have five children, all of whom are fond of reading. Oldest, eighteen years. I have consumption. We will be thankful for any reading. Mrs. John Grady, Nettle Ridge, Virginia.

I would be more than thankful for any reading to pass away lonely hours. I live in a lonely place far from any road, and am not able to buy reading. Mrs. Allie Arnos, Heareford, North Carolina.

I am a poor widow with four small children, oldest not ten years old. Am now living with my mother and brother. We are in very poor circumstances; live on rented land. We can hardly make both ends meet. I am particularly fond of reading, but I rarely see anything to read. Will some kind friend please send me some novels or magazines to help me to pass off the long lonely Sundays? I will pass all on. Address Mrs. Flora Dillian, Osage, Patrick County, Virginia.

I have received so much nice reading, and have one of the very dearest of correspondents. Now I am to change my address from Houston to Hereford, Texas, and will be glad to hear from my dear ones. I will send three new names of lonely ones,—Mrs. Rena Gammage, Houston, Texas, and two orphan sisters, Miss Stella Bland, Houston, Texas, and Miss Grace Bland, Clyde, Oklahoma. Grace is a lonely girl, and would enjoy a young correspondent. Many thanks to the dear ones who have sent me reading. God bless and reward them. Mrs. Kate Woftsger, Hereford, Texas.

Some dear friend is sending me *The Cheerful Letter*, for which I am very thankful. We would be *so* glad to receive the *Ladies' Home Journal* or *Youth's Companion*, current numbers. My address is changed from Moretz to Foscoe, North Carolina. Robert A. Taylor.

I would be glad to get a Bible (Teacher's Bible is preferred), "David Copperfield," "Ivanhoe," "Stepping Heavenward"; and I would be very grateful to the Cheerful Letter friends if some one would send me the *Ladies' Home Companion* or *Ladies' Home Journal* regularly, which after reading I will pass to others. My minister's name is Rev. I. W. Thomas, Lenoir, North Carolina, Caldwell County. Oh, words could never express the gratitude of my heart to you for the above books, as I am very anxious to receive reading matter. Miss Ida Greer, Blackstone, Caldwell County, North Carolina.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

Contributions to this department may be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.

A LETTER.

Although I am not a mother, I have become very much interested in the "Mothers' Council." I liked the article in the May number very much, and agree with the writer that what the world needs to-day is good mothers. I believe with Holmes that, to make good men and women, we must begin a hundred years before they are born; and this must be done by educating the mothers.

Oh, there are so few mothers who realize the responsibility resting upon them! It is in their power to a great extent to make their child's character as pure and bright as one could wish or as black with sin and shame as one can imagine. Day by day the mother builds into her child what she sees around her. If she is surrounded by sin and crime, unless she can keep her mind from dwelling upon it, it is sure to leave its stain upon the character of the unborn child. And so I think that beautiful surroundings have their effect also.

After we have laid the foundation for a beautiful character, unless it is properly trained, a great deal of its beauty is lost. Can we be too careful in that training when we know that we are building for eternity?

How much this means, words refuse to tell, because they cannot. I know a mother who has three very bright-looking children, but she seems to lack firmness in governing them. The children will ask, "Mamma, may we go over to Nellie's and play?" She answers, "No, you can't." They ask again and again, and receive the answer, "No, I said." But, after teasing for some time, the mother says fretfully, "Well, go on, then, and hush." Away they go, knowing they have gained the victory. Again we hear her saying, "Hush and go to sleep: there's a big dog out doors," or "a big black man will get you." The little one, thus quieted for the moment, nestles close to mother and falls asleep, to be haunted in its dreams by black men and dogs. Once more we hear her using threats that should never pass the lips of any noble-minded mother. The children know that mother doesn't mean it, and deep down in their hearts they know that mother has told a lie. That is a strange word, but that is what it really is. Oh, what bitter suffering the child endures when it finds for the first time that mother is false! It loses confidence in her and doubts others. We need mothers who are absolutely truthful in every little thing, mothers who are so honest that, when baby looks up into her face, he knows there is no trace of falsehood there.

Another mother has a boy whose thirst for knowledge is so great that he is continually asking questions. He asks about everything he sees, but the mother tells him very little because she is so busy. Doing what? Keeping a house straightened while she is allowing the character of her boy to grow crooked. She often tells him to go away and not bother her; and I often wonder if he will take her at her word, and run away to keep from bothering her.

I have presented to you two very dark pictures of motherhood, but they only show how very thoughtless so many mothers are.

Minnie.

It seems to me that the Editor's exceptions to Dr. Parkhurst's article in your May number hardly do him justice. He does *not* advocate leaving children to "chance until mature age," but particularly declares that the education of the mother must begin with the young girl. And with his declaration that the home has more to do with the child's true education than any outside influence that school, church, or state can exert, I think any of us who have had much to do with children will heartily agree.

Colonel Higginson's article on the claims of public duty on a wife and mother's time is amusing, but, like many of his, slightly inconsequent. Nor are the examples he quotes much to the point. Miss Nightingale, at the time of the Crimean War, was a single woman of a certain age,* free for philanthropic work. Mrs. Child was a childless wife with time to write; and her "Mother's Book," one of the most helpful works on education ever written, shows that she thoroughly appreciated the necessity of a mother's placing her home duties above all others. While any one who reads Mrs. Stowe's life will learn what self-effacement means, if she did not know it before.

The question here is not of the mother who is forced to leave her little ones to indifferent care or no care at all, while she earns their daily bread or attends to business which cannot, or she thinks cannot, be set aside. The New York mother of whose case I read in the last daily paper, whose two children, locked up in a high flat while she went out shopping, climbed on to the fire escape and fell to the stone pavement below to be picked up dying by the neighbors, perhaps deserves pity more than censure. But what shall we say of one who went without the pressure of necessity?

The conscientious mistress of a household finds its proper duties conflicting enough among themselves. And she knows that, in addition to them, she ought to be trying to do some good to the world at large and give herself some mental training and rest and recreation. To say that she has time for everything she ought to do is exasperating; and, moreover, it isn't true. You must make a choice among duties every moment. But don't—supposing you to be a young wife and mother—be beguiled by Colonel Higginson's eloquence into leaving your baby with a bad cold in the hands of an incompetent nursery maid,† because you have promised to read a paper on "Unconscious Cerebration" before the Antipodal Club.

* About thirty-six.

† Has Colonel Higginson advocated this sort of treatment of a sick baby?

The paper is not necessary to the salvation of the world. Nay, though you may not think so, a hundred as good are written by young women every year. And, if you have had the mental discipline of writing it, it has been of sufficient use already. But supposing baby to be well, and your hard-worked husband comes home with tickets for the theatre on the all-important evening you had set for finishing it! Shuffle your papers into the drawer and go with him, even if it is to remain unfinished forever. If it is a rainy day and school doesn't keep, and your big boys are at home brimming over with mischief, take your mending and sit with them and play games. Don't lock yourself up to go on with the plaque you are painting, even though you hope to work it off on some wealthy acquaintance and with the proceeds procure yourself and the children finer clothes than your husband's means allow. Your friend has too many painted plaques already, and I hope you don't think you have too many children. Be thankful if you have only to make these trifling sacrifices and are not compelled by a visitation of scarlet fever or whooping cough to drop suddenly and indefinitely your work on the Hospital Committee or the Friendly Society or the Associated Charities. If you are wise, you will learn to undertake no outside duties that you are not prepared to drop. If you burn to travel and write books of travel, as did Ida Pfeiffer, begin by waiting as patiently as she did, and see your husband buried and your sons married and settled in business before you set off to go round the world. You will do much if you do half as well as she.

It must not be assumed that all unmarried women are free from domestic ties, which for a large proportion of them are as imperative as for wives, and often with less reward; nor does wealth give immunity. Indeed, the mistress of a great establishment, if she recognizes her duties to all its members, often suffers the more from too much brain-work without a proportionate amount of manual labor. Neither are men exempt. How many a one of them works cheerfully at a business he dislikes, and puts aside his own tastes and pursuits, that his home may be a nest of peace and comfort. No candid person will deny that public duties are more in a man's line,—indeed, that they often come by way of his business itself; but a man who leaves his wife and children to starve or to live on the charity of strangers, while he poses as a philosopher, is a poor creature whom not even the genius of a Shelley or a Coleridge can excuse.

But how about the great acts, the great messages for the world? Dear friend, they are the very last things you should worry yourself about. You may be very sure that all that is provided for. If God has a message for you, he will find the time and place for its delivery; and a faithful performance of your daily duties is the very best preparation for it. It may not be what you thought it would be or come when or as you expect it. It may be a few words to some other person or a few lines in the corner of a penny newspaper.

"One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world has never lost."

If the arrow go straight, it will find the fitting goal. If you want more than this,—if you want fame and applause and money,—you care more about yourself than your work, and the arrow will fall half-way, because the eye of the archer is not single. Let all of us aspiring, overburdened women sincerely try to do the duty that seems paramount at the moment, and our mistakes shall teach us lessons; and even for our faults we shall be able to make such atonement that they, too, may be but steps on the upward path which we strive to follow with those we love.

A. B. P.

I am glad to see that there is interest enough in the subject under discussion to bring out one or two letters from readers of *The Cheerful Letter*, although they seem to me to have somewhat missed the point. On some things we should all agree. It is hardly necessary to maintain that it is important that a mother should be a *good* mother: there can be no two opinions on that subject. But, as to what *constitutes* a good mother, there might be different opinions; and here we may find room for discussion.

It is difficult to believe that any one can seriously argue that a mother ought not to neglect a sick child in order to read a paper at a club. There seems little use in answering this. If the writer has found or thinks

she has found anything to justify such neglect in anything in our previous number, she would be able to find something just as bad in anything stated or argued. So we will not attempt to refute her position, but hope others will read the article — or have read it — with more care.

The objection to Dr. Parkhurst's position is not that he says that the home has more to do with the child's true education than outside influences. It is that he maintains that a mother should have *no* other life but in her children. This is an over-statement: it is to this exaggeration that we object.

It is not that her chief interest should be in her home, nor that it should begin there: it is that it should *end* there that we think the mistaken view.

And it is much observation and experience that has given us this belief. We will try to make the point a little clearer.

Many people observe in the young people of the present day a growing heartlessness and selfishness painful to witness, and a bad outlook for the future. This self-seeking spirit is, in many cases, directly traceable to the exaggerated self-abnegation of the mothers (in some cases the fathers) of the present day. It is idle to expect that children whose mothers teach them selfishness, by the theory and practice both of allowing themselves to be *nothing* but the bond-slave of their children, should throw off the bad effect of this treatment when they arrive at years of discretion. Moreover, observation shows that it is not so. I have myself witnessed several sad instances of the result of exactly the theory and practice which Dr. Parkhurst recommends, and which his admirers uphold.

Moreover, it is a great mistake to assume that the woman who does not attempt anything beyond her care of her children will necessarily care for them more or better than one of more mind and more heart whose care begins at home, but does not stop there. I remember a case in point.

A woman who was of the type described and recommended by the readers of Dr. Parkhurst — that is, one who warmly advocated a mother having no interests outside of her home — was one day speaking to another mother with some severity of mothers who had outside interests, and in her opinion must neglect their primary duties. The lady to whom she spoke was somewhat noted for her usefulness in several directions. At last, when she felt as if she had been attacked or reflected on by the censures of the other mother, she said: "I do not want to say anything unkind; but I must remind you that *I* take *all* the care of my children *myself*. You do leave yours a good deal of the time to a nursery-maid."

Here it is. The woman of the richer and deeper nature will be *first* a better *mother*, and then a better everything else.

In another number we will give a sketch of a mother of this sort. And we here call attention to the important point that a mother who is not totally absorbed in her children, but has heart enough, mind enough, character enough, to spare for the children of others, for the large interests of society, and for the great causes which affect the world's progress, is often more unselfish, more self-effacing in a true sense, than a mother who sees everything dimly except the claims and needs of those closely related to *her*, and for whom, therefore, her love and care are too often only a secondary form of selfishness. Such a one as the first was Mrs. Stowe, who would have thought it quite wrong to write "Uncle Tom's Cabin," had she been of Dr. Parkhurst's opinion. She was the mother that Colonel Higginson believes in,— one who first had more to give her children, her husband, her small domestic cares, than other women, and yet was not limited by these, when called to special service.

L. F. C.

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE MAKING OF A BUTTERFLY.

To the Greeks of old as to the moderns of to-day and many enlightened people in all the intervening ages, the making of a butterfly has naturally seemed one of the most wonderful things in this wonderful world. The secret by which an unattractive, slug-like caterpillar is in the course of two brief weeks transformed into the most ethereal of the children of the air, on whose translucent membranes nature has delighted to paint such delicate and beautiful colors, seems likely to remain always a mystery of mysteries. Were we able to understand it "all in all," then should we get at the secret of

creation just as surely as would Tennyson, had he known in its completeness that famous "flower in the crannied wall."

In the external features the life of a butterfly is sufficiently familiar. It starts with an egg laid by the mother insect upon the leaf of an appropriate food-plant. The egg shortly hatches into a tiny caterpillar, which begins the second stage in its life-history as an elongate larva, strange in form and void of any resemblance to the parent from which so shortly before it came. The larva feeds and grows. In a few days its skin is stretched on account of the increase in size, for with insects and related creatures the skin is not continually increased from growth within itself. Instead of this a new skin is formed beneath the old one, and the latter is sloughed off, much as a snake from time to time casts its scaly covering.

In this moulting process the skin upon the head splits apart along the middle line of the upper surface, and the break is continued straight backward through several of the body rings. By various more or less violent movements the caterpillar manages to withdraw its head from the old covering, and then to escape entirely, leaving the cast skin—an exuvium, the naturalists call it—at one side. In the case of many species the caterpillar, after resting awhile for parts of its new covering to harden, calmly eats its exuvium, presumably that the presence of the latter may not be a sign to some bird or other enemy that a caterpillar is in the neighborhood.

The larva is now much larger than before. After recovering from the stress of moulting, it again begins to devour the food-plant, feeding more ravenously, and continuing to eat, with intervals of rest, for about a week. Then it has so increased in size that another moult is necessary, and this is gone through with in the same way as before. During the next three or four weeks this operation is repeated twice or thrice, making a total of four or five moults during the period from the egg to the full-grown caterpillar.

After the last of its larval moults the caterpillar feeds for a week or ten days. Then, apparently, the prodigious appetite it has shown throughout its life becomes satisfied; for the insect becomes restless and wanders about. It is searching instinctively for some sort of shelter where it may spend the quiet pupal period, when it will be utterly helpless to escape the attack of its many enemies. Having found a sheltered corner of a fence or some similar situation, it proceeds to spin a silken web upon the under side of the chosen board, in which a little later it entangles its hind feet and hangs downward preparatory to becoming a chrysalis. The bare outline that I have thus given would apply to many species of butterflies. Among others, it fits the beautiful Monarch Butterfly, so familiar to every one who goes afield from midsummer until autumn. The eggs of this regal insect are deposited on the leaves of milkweed, upon whose substance the resulting caterpillars feed from the time of hatching until they become full-grown. For the remainder of my account of the making of a butterfly I wish to describe this species in particular, because it is so well known.

The full-grown caterpillar of the Monarch Butterfly is a good-sized black and white insect about two inches long. It spins—sometimes upon the under surface of the milkweed leaf, sometimes elsewhere — a little mat of silk, in which it entangles the hooked claws of its hind feet. Then it lets go with its fore feet, and hangs downward with the front end of its body curled upward. In this position it remains for some hours, — perhaps a day,— the body-juices gravitating downward and causing a swollen appearance on the lower segments. Then the skin splits apart again, and it is wriggled off by the contortions of the body. When it finally drops away, there is left a strange-looking creature, broader below than above. This is a transition stage that lasts but a very short time: soon the form is entirely changed, so that the broadest part is above instead of below. The definite outline of the chrysalis is soon taken on, the outer tissues hardening into a distinct covering. The insect now is a beautiful green color with wonderful golden spots upon its surface and a few black spots just below the black cremaster by which the chrysalis is connected with the web of silk upon the leaf.

In this quiet chrysalis the insect remains for nearly a fortnight. Then the structure of the forthcoming butterfly begins to show through the thin outer covering, and you know that the period of the chrysalis is

nearly ended. If you keep watch, you will probably see the sudden bursting of the outer envelope and the quick grasping of its surface by the legs of the newly emerged butterfly. Its wings at first are short and crumpled, bearing little resemblance to those of the fully developed butterfly. But, as it hangs there with one pair of legs holding to the empty chrysalis and the other to the leaf above, the wings rapidly lengthen, hanging limply downward as the body-juices penetrate the veins. A little later they expand in the other direction, the hind wings reaching full size before the front ones. Finally, both pairs of wings are completely expanded; and the butterfly is likely to walk to the top of the support, where it rests for an hour or two while its tissues harden before it attempts to fly.

Such, in brief outline, is the process by which a butterfly is made, so far as it is to be determined by external observation. But these are only the visible results of invisible internal processes, of the nature of which we could scarcely hazard a guess from the most careful outward scrutiny. To learn of these internal developments, many specimens in different periods of growth have to be sacrificed to the microtome and microscope, so that by careful study the variation in the structure and position of the minute cells of which the insect is composed may be determined. During recent years great progress in such knowledge has been made, so that we have a fairly complete idea of the method of development, although we do not know and perhaps shall never know the "all in all" of the marvellous process.

It is probable that ever since men first studied nature critically, there have been attempts to explain the way in which a butterfly is made. Nearly two centuries ago Swammerdam, the great Dutch naturalist, studied very carefully the development of butterflies and other insects. He found that, if he placed in boiling water a caterpillar that was ready to pupate, the outer skin could easily be removed, revealing beneath the immature butterfly with its legs and antennæ. This led him to believe that the process of development was simply a process of unfolding; that is, as Professor Packard has put it, that the form of the larva, pupa, and imago pre-existed in the egg, and even in the ovary; and that the insects in these stages were distinct animals, contained one inside the other, like a nest of boxes, or a series of envelopes, one within the other, or, to use Swammerdam's own words, "Animal in animali, seu papilo intra erucam reconditus." This was called the emboitement or encasement theory, and for nearly a hundred years it was held by naturalists to be correct. Early in the nineteenth century, however, it was discredited by Herold, who studied carefully the development of butterflies; but it was not until 1864 that it was definitely replaced by another and much more convincing theory propounded by Weissmann, the great German zoölogist.

By careful studies, in which the modern methods of microscopic research were employed, Professor Weissmann found that, instead of the organs of the adult butterfly being present in the caterpillar, they really result from the breaking down of the various tissues of the larva, followed by a remarkable process of rebuilding, in which the starting-points are certain germinal buds or "imaginal disks." This theory has entirely replaced the encasement theory in the minds of naturalists. The germinal buds appear very early in the life of the insect, sometimes even before it hatches from the egg. They remain with little change throughout the growth of the caterpillar. Just before the period of pupation the various organs of the larva are broken down by the action of the blood corpuscles, the result of their destruction being a creamy mass, which is immediately utilized for the rebuilding of the tissues. During the process of destruction of the larval organs the germinal buds remain intact, and simultaneously they begin to grow by building themselves up from the creamy material surrounding them. In this way the buds develop in a short time into the various organs of the butterfly.

Clarence Mares Weed.

He sets an open path before us: we must walk in it. More, we must be willing to believe that the path is open, that we have strength to walk in it. God's gift glides into man's choice. It is needful that we should follow with our effort in the track of his foregoing power.—*George MacDonald.*

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[*All contributions to this column may be sent to Miss K. C. Porter, 22 Brimmer Street, Boston, Mass.*]

I.

Novel Arithmetic.

Ex.—What number becomes even by subtracting one? Ans. S-even.

1. What number becomes heavy by adding one?
2. What number belongs to us by subtracting one?
3. What number increases tenfold by adding one?
4. What number is elevated by adding one?
5. What number is finished by adding one?
6. What number becomes frequent by adding one?
7. What number becomes animal by adding two?

(*St. Nicholas.*)

II.

Combination Puzzle.

When the crosses in the following sentences have been replaced by the right letters, five familiar axioms will appear.

1. Lxt "nxvxr dx sxaxrx" bx yxux mxtxox.
2. A bxixh hxaxt mxaxkxs a bxoxmxnx, vxsxgx.
3. Fxlxy ix, txe pxvxrxy ox txe mxnx.
4. A gxixtx cxnxcxexcx nxexs nx axcxsxr.
5. A pxnxy sxvxd ix a pxnxy exrxex.

(*St. Nicholas.*)

III.

Buried Birds.

(Two birds are hidden in each sentence.)

1. We saw, on our tour, a company of gypsies wandering about.
2. Ned caught a rat in a mouse-trap,—in tail first it was, too.
3. She began nettling me, else we wouldn't have had a word.
4. Yes, he is a very sharp young fellow, and very sharp in his way.
5. It is seldom a visitor uses such awkward expressions.
6. Mr. Jones will not rebuild his wall, owing to the high rate allowed to masons.

(*St. Nicholas.*)

Conundrums.

1. Which runs the fastest, heat or cold?
2. What is the first thing a man sets in his garden?
3. What would a stone become if thrown into the Red Sea?
4. Why is an icy sidewalk like music?
5. On which side of a donkey would you look for the most hair?
6. What is better than presence of mind in case of accident?

Answers to Puzzles in June Number.

I. *Charade.*—Perch.

II. Lime, Thorn, Yew, Elm, Balm, Locust, Caper, Aspen, Plane, Maple, Ash, Cedar, Almond, Peach, Gum, Pear, Lemon, Teak, Palm, Laurel, Teil, Plum, Cork.

III. *Rhymed Numerical Enigma.*—Madam.

IV. Beginning at C— in actual.

"Calm weather in June
Sets the corn in tune."

V. *Conundrums.*

1. Your name.
2. It is not current.
3. One is happy and careless, the other is cappy and hairless.

SMALL COURTESIES.

One evening last week I entered a room where several young people, with books and work, were sitting around the lamp. The young man with the lexicon and the grammar on the table before him was the busiest of the group; but he instantly arose, and remained standing until I had taken my seat. The little action was automatic. The habit of this family is to practise small courtesies, and the boys have been trained from childhood to pay deference to women.

Equally charming are the manners of the girls in the home I speak of,—gentle, soft spoken, appreciative, considerate, and reverential. To old people they are tender, to children kind, to each other lovely.

One cannot too sedulously look after the small courtesies in one's conduct, and, if one be charged with the management of a household, in the accustomed ways of the family. Habits count for everything here, and example is better than precept.—*Margaret E. Sangster, in Interior.*

The editor will esteem it a favor if those who do not retain a file of *The Cheerful Letter* will send her one or more copies of the following numbers:—

November, 1895; November, 1896; January, 1898; February, 1900.

They may be addressed to her, Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass. This will be her address until further notice.

Please notice the change in our treasurer's address.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged — not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort — by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,— good citizens of the country,—for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The address of our treasurer for the summer months is Miss Louise Howe, Little Nahant, Nahant, Mass.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

Members are kindly requested to send odd numbers of periodicals directly to places where they are needed. Rev. B. C. Hammond, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, is always glad to receive them.

To have offers and requests printed in the Book Club, they must be in the hands of our Book Club secretary, by the *first* of the month previous to that of the number in which they are printed.

DIRECTIONS.

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